AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Amended) A method for drilling a wellbore having a fluid circuit whereby a drilling fluid is supplied to a drill bit and the drilling fluid with entrained cuttings (the "return fluid") is returned from the drill bit to a surface location, the method comprising:

(a) positioning a fluid circulation device in the return fluid, the fluid circulation device providing the primary motive force for flowing the return fluid from the drill bit to the surface location, the fluid circulation device operating substantially independent of drill bit rotation.

2. (Original) The method according to claim (1) wherein the fluid circuit includes a supply line and a return line, and further comprising:

(a) supplying drilling fluid to the drilling assembly via the supply line; and

(b) returning the return fluid to the surface location via the return line.

3. (Original) The method according to claim (2) wherein the supply line includes at least an annulus of the wellbore.

4. (Original) The method according to claim (2) wherein the return line includes one of (i) drill string, (ii) a coiled tubing, (iii) a casing, (iv) a liner, and (iv) a tubular member.

5. (Original) The method according to claim (1) wherein the fluid circulation device is selected from one of (a) a positive displacement pump, (b) a centrifugal type pump, (c) a Moineau-type pump, and (d) a jet pump.

6. (Original) The method according to claim (1) further comprising driving the fluid circulation device with a drive assembly selected from one of (a) a positive displacement drive, (b) a turbine drive, (c) an electric motor, (d) a hydraulic motor, and (e) a Moineau-type motor.

7. (Original) The method according to claim (1) further comprising reducing the size of cuttings entrained in the return fluid with a comminution device.

8. (Original) The method according to claim (2) further comprising positioning a pump in the supply line to providing a supplemental motive force for circulating the drilling fluid.

9. (Original) The method according to claim (8) wherein the supply line includes at least an annulus of the wellbore.

10. (Original) The method according to claim (1) further comprising energizing the fluid circulation device with one of (i) a fuel cell; (ii) hydraulic fluid; (iii) geothermal power; (iv) surface supplied electrical power; and (v) compressed gas.

11. (Original) The method according to claim (1) further comprising rotating the drill bit rotated by a motor that is operated by one of (i) a fuel cell; (ii) hydraulic fluid; (iii) geothermal power; and (iv) surface supplied electrical power.

12. (Original) The method according to claim (1) further comprising rotating the drill bit and driving the fluid circulation device with a same motor.

13. (Original) The method according to claim (1) further comprising providing a localized flow rate proximate to the drill bit that is functionally effective to wash the drill bit of cuttings.

14. (Original) The method according to claim (1) wherein the drilling assembly includes a drill bit, and further comprising: rotating the drill bit with a drill string at least partially formed of a liner.

15. (Original) The method according to claim (1) wherein the surface location is an offshore platform.

16. (Original) The method according to claim (1) further comprising positioning a secondary fluid circulation device in serial alignment with the fluid circulation device, the fluid circulation device and the secondary fluid circulation device cooperating to provide the primary motive force for flowing the return fluid from the drill bit to the surface location.

17. (canceled)

18. (Amended) A system for drilling a wellbore, comprising:

(a) a fluid circuit for supplying a drilling fluid to a drill bit and returning the drilling fluid with entrained cuttings (the "return fluid") from the drill bit to the surface; and

(b) a fluid circulation device in the return fluid, said fluid circulation device providing the primary motive force for flowing the return fluid to the surface, the fluid circulation device operating substantially independent of drill bit rotation.

19. (Original) The system according to claim (18) wherein said fluid circuit includes a supply line for conveying drilling fluid to said drill bit and a return line for returning the return fluid to the surface

20. (Original) The system according to claim (19) wherein said supply line comprises at least an annulus of the wellbore.

21. (Original) The system according to claim (19) wherein said return line comprises one of (i) drill string, (ii) a coiled tubing, (iii) a casing, (iv) a liner, and (iv) a tubular member.

22. (Original) The system according to claim (18) wherein said fluid circulation device is selected from one of (a) a positive displacement pump, (b) a centrifugal type pump, (c) a jet pump, and (d) a Moineau-type pump.

23. (Original) The system according to claim (18) wherein said fluid circulation device is driven by one of (a) a positive displacement drive, (b) a turbine drive, (c) a electric motor, (d) a hydraulic motor, and (e) a Moineau-type motor.

24. (Original) The system according to claim (18) further comprising a comminution device for reducing the size of cuttings entrained in the return fluid.

25. (Original) The system according to claim (19) further comprising a pump positioned in said supply line to provide a supplemental motive force for flowing the drilling fluid.

26. (Original) The system according to claim (25) wherein the supply line includes at least an annulus of the wellbore.

27. (Original) The system according to claim (18) wherein said fluid circulation device is driven by a drive assembly energized by one of (i) a fuel cell; (ii) hydraulic fluid; (iii) geothermal power; (iv) surface supplied hydraulic fluid; and (v) surface supplied electrical power.

28. (Original) The system according to claim (18) further comprising a motor coupled to the drill bit, said motor being operated by one of (i) a fuel cell; (ii) hydraulic fluid; (iii) geothermal power; (iv) surface supplied hydraulic fluid; (v) surface supplied electrical power, and (vi) compressed gas.

29. (Original) The system according to claim (18) wherein said drill bit is rotated by one of: (i) a drill string at least partially formed of a liner, and (ii) a motor for driving said fluid circulation device

30. (Original) The system according to claim (19) further comprising:

(a) a variable volume tank positioned proximate to a seabed floor, said tank supplying drilling fluid into said supply line; and

(b) an offshore platform adapted to receive the return fluid flowing through said return line.

31. (Original) The system according to claim (18) further comprising a secondary fluid circulation device in serial alignment with said fluid circulation device, said fluid circulation device and said secondary fluid circulation device cooperating to provide the primary motive force for flowing the return fluid from the drill bit to the surface location.

32. (Original) The system according to claim (18) further comprising an near bit fluid circulation device positioned proximate to said drill bit, said near bit fluid circulation

device adapted to provide a localized flow rate functionally effective for cleaning the drill bit of cuttings.

33. (Canceled)